CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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LETTER DATED 14 SEPTEMBER 1995 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF AUSTRALIA TO THE CONFERENCE ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT TRANSMITTING THE TEXT OF A STATEMENT BY THE CURRENT CHAIRMAN OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM, THE AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER, THE HONOURABLE P.J. KEATING MP, ISSUED ON 7 SEPTEMBER 1995, CONCERNING THE TESTING OF A NUCLEAR WEAPON BY FRANCE

Attached is the text of a statement by the current Chairman of the South Pacific Forum, the Australian Prime Minister, the Hon. P.J. Keating MP, issued on 7 September 1995, concerning the testing of a nuclear weapon by France. The South Pacific Forum comprises the following member States: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Western Samoa.

I would be grateful if you would issue this text as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament and distribute it to all member States and non-member participants in the work of the CD.

(Signed) Richard Starr
Ambassador and
Permanent Representative
for Disarmament matters

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STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM, THE AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER, THE HON. P.J. KEATING MP

TESTING OF A NUCLEAR WEAPON BY FRANCE

As current Chair of the South Pacific Forum, on behalf of my Forum colleagues I condemn the test of a nuclear weapon by France in the South Pacific.

France has defied the wishes of the people of the South Pacific, the appeal by the Asian nations as expressed in the recent ASEAN Regional Forum statement that called on the nuclear weapon States to bring an immediate end to testing, and the voice of an increasing part of the European and international community. The majority of the French people also oppose France's testing programme in the South Pacific.

Of particular concern to the countries of the South Pacific is the French Government's reluctance to fully address the environmental and health risks posed by the testing.

Forum leaders reiterate the calls made by South Pacific Environment Ministers in Brisbane on 17 August for:

- An immediate end to testing of nuclear weapons in the South Pacific and the closing of associated facilities, except those required for future environmental monitoring;

- France to accept full and exclusive responsibility for any adverse impacts from French testing on the South Pacific environment and people; and

- France to provide access to the international community to all French scientific data and to the testing sites themselves to enable an independent and comprehensive assessment of the effects of testing.

Forum countries call on the French Government to acknowledge the weight of opinion against nuclear testing and abandon immediately its testing programme in the South Pacific.

Forum leaders will consider nuclear testing issues as part of the South Pacific Forum meeting in Madang, Papua New Guinea, from 13-15 September.

Canberra
7 September 1995